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## Book Reviews.

**The Mind of the Master.** By JOHN WATSON, D.D. (Ian Maclaren). New York : Dodd, Mead & Co., 1896. Pp. viii+338. Price \$1.50.

This book is fresh with the air of Drumtochty—that parish of “scandalous health.” There comes also with it a breath from a more distant “mountain” where long ago the Master made his demand for a righteousness exceeding that of the Scribes and Pharisees. One needs but to read the list of chapters to get a whiff from these invigorating uplands, and eagerly anticipates such themes as, Jesus the Supreme Teacher, The Sovereignty of Character Devotion to a Person the Dynamic of Religion, Fatherhood the Final Idea of God, The Kingdom of God.

Dr. Watson is in line with the recent revival of special interest in the teaching of Jesus, of which the most significant production as yet is Wendt's great treatise. His book, however, does not invite comparison with that or with less pretentious works, being much more popular and avowedly hortatory in its method. While there is no direct evidence of the sermon form, there is constant evidence of the preacher—style, point of view, and treatment of material being those of the orator rather than the professional student. If this mode of procedure needed any apology, the author has provided his own in the declaration that “we criticise every other teacher : we have an intuition of Jesus. He is not a subject of study, he is a revelation to the soul—that or nothing.” Dr. Watson aims not so much at detailing the contents of Jesus' teachings as at so presenting his teaching as to persuade men to acknowledge his supremacy.

The style is what we should expect from him who has introduced us to Jamie Soutar, and Burnbrae, and Marget Howe, and the Doctor,—thoroughly alive, warm with enthusiasm, keenly epigrammatic. How much that we all wish to express is given us in sentences like these : “Jesus is full of surprises, but they are all the surprises of perfection ;” “the ‘I’ that sounds from every sentence of the teaching of Jesus is not egotism ; it is deity :” “Jesus found religion a rite ; he left it a passion ;” “The kingdom of God can only rule over willing hearts ; it has no helots within its borders.” In respect of contents the most satisfactory part of the book is the chapter on Fatherhood the Final Idea of God. The author has grasped this fundamental thought of the Master and handles with proper vigor the notion “that Jesus had an esoteric word for his intimates, and an exoteric for the people, saying Father to John, and Judge to the publicans.” He also shows how foreign to Jesus' idea is the

sickly sentimentality which forgets or ignores that God is the "Holy Father," whose name is to be hallowed. The author's "passion for Jesus" which breathes through this chapter as well as the whole book, has its chief expression in the chapters on the Dynamic of Religion, and Jesus the Supreme Teacher. He has only severe words for "the idealizing criticism which evaporates the person of Christ in his teaching, and while it may leave us a master certainly denies us a Lord." These two chapters, which are not successive in the author's arrangement, should be read together if a somewhat partial impression is not to be carried away from the emphasis on Christ as a Teacher. Carefulness and fulness of grasp characterize the last chapter, that on the Kingdom of God. Its excellence is in its clear setting forth of Christ's twofold conception of a kingdom already present in the hearts that love God, and a kingdom awaiting its consummation; and in its grasp of the method of the kingdom—"The reformer, who has his own function and is to be heartily commended, approaches humanity from the outside and proceeds by machinery; Jesus approaches humanity from the inside and proceeds by influence." "He was not content to change men's circumstances, he dared to attempt something higher—to change their souls."

It is distasteful where so much is fair and strong to call attention to blemishes, and were there only those incident to the epigrammatic style and hortatory method they might be passed unnoticed. Sometimes, however, Dr. Watson has suffered his dislike for certain phases of historic Christianity to lead to a misrepresentation or a misapprehension of apostolic teachings. This is most noticeable in his arraignment of Paul for his substitution of the conception of the church for Jesus' preferable conception of the kingdom of God. Dr. Watson has a not unreasonable dislike for ecclesiasticism. But it is not fair to hurl it at Paul. He is not the father of ecclesiasticism. Had our author kept in mind his own earlier statement—"The church is to the kingdom what the electric current is to electricity. It is the kingdom organized for worship and aggression"—would he have expressed himself so unqualifiedly as he has in the last chapter? The idea of the church ought not to be held answerable for later perversions of it. A like lack of carefulness of statement appears in the otherwise most helpful chapter on Jesus the Supreme Teacher. Dr. Watson pleads for ethical rather than doctrinal "creeds" as conditions of church membership. It is possible, however, to have and make profitable use of intellectual confessions of faith without making subscription to them a condition of reception into the church. That Christians often have made the mistake of setting the creed as doorkeeper in the house of God does not warrant disparagement of the creeds but only of this use of them.

To us the least satisfactory chapter in the book is that on the Culture of the Cross. The title tells the whole story. And as far as it goes it is a true story. We must never forget that Christ is said to have "learned obedience by the things which he suffered," having been made "perfect through suffer-

ings." Nor may it be forgotten that Jesus commanded his disciples to take up the cross daily. The culture of the cross is a profound necessity for our attainment of any fulness of character. But when Dr. Watson asks us to believe that suffering is an essential feature of the highest life, he makes what seems to us an unwarrantable identification of suffering and self-sacrifice, which last is essential to fullest life, but *may* be the highest joy. Moreover, in his exclusive reference to this educational aspect of Christ's sufferings he leaves unconsidered precisely the largest suggestions of Jesus for the interpretation of his cross—"This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many unto remission of sins," the life given "a ransom for many," the Good Shepherd "layeth down his life, for the sheep"—in which we seem to see "salvation join issue with death." This chapter is not so satisfactory as Dr. Watson's own beautiful meditation on the Shadow of the Cross in his volume *The Upper Room*.

It is not strange that the book has met with some severe treatment at the hands of the critics, for it invites quarrel alike with dogmatists and with biblical theology. But it is a refreshing book and does not a little to quicken that "passion for Jesus" which Dr. Watson justly feels to be a need of our religious life.

R. R.

**With Open Face, or Jesus Mirrored in Matthew, Mark and Luke.** By ALEXANDER BALMAIN BRUCE, D.D., Professor of New Testament Exegesis in the Free Church College, Glasgow, author of *The Kingdom of God*, *The Training of the Twelve*, *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, etc. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Pp. vi + 267.

It often happens that the by-products of the literary workshop are quite as valuable as its masterpieces. Authorship is often attended with more or less mental uncertainty which has disappeared by the time the work has been completed. More than that, the views which of necessity must be to a large extent the outcome of authorship are more distinct and often more intense when one's labor is completed. It is, therefore, often the case that in popular sketches of great scholars we get the core and soul of their thinking.

It is with something of this feeling that one rises from reading this latest work of Professor Bruce. Nine of its chapters have already appeared in the *Expositor*, and are familiar to the readers of that excellent journal, but collected they represent the views of their author in remarkably distinct and usable form. The titles of some of the chapters are themselves indices of the thought of the book, such as the Prophetic Picture of Matthew, the Realistic Picture of Mark, the Idealistic Picture of Luke, the Escapes of Jesus.

With one chapter, that upon "Your Father Which is in Heaven," we find ourselves in some difficulty. The general position of Professor Bruce in